THE Bloomfield Record.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

S. MORRIS HULIN, Editor and Proprietor.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 1893

The action of Town Committeemen Beach, Oakes, Stout and Lockwood last Monday in refusing to permit competition upon a small printing contract was plainly an attempt to not only suppress free speech in Bloomfield, but to subsidize from the public treasury a newspaper of their own. Three of the four are stockholders and directors, we believe, in the paper they voted to favor, which explains the true inwardness of the Lockwood motion that was railroaded through, with cut and dried race track effrontery, against the better judgment of the minority.

It was but another striking illustration of the old saying: "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad." Three men were unreasonably angry, because they can not control public opinion in this town, but instead of injuring THE RECORD they have advertised it and put themselves in a very unpleasant political hole. Their position is that of insisting that the town's treasury shall be drawn upon to help them crush out of existence a newspaper that has never treated them otherwise than fairly, but whose independence they both fear and hate. That is the stand the majority of four have taken, and it is altogether reprehensible and defenceless. It is bad politics, and worse as a matter of principle. We have never attacked the gentlemen named, have never until now had occasion to criticize their official acts, and can account for their action in this particular only upon the basis that they cannot get used to the "live and let live" ideas of American progress and enlightened Christianity.

That is the most charitable view that can be taken of the unwise discrimination that was made against THE RECORD. Whether men like Messrs. Beach, Oakes and Stout can abide it, and be happy under the new regime or not, *the people* are taking control of their own affairs in this country, as the people of France undertook to do in 1789. The privileged orders then would not accept the situation, would not affiliate with the "third estate" and readjust government to changed conditions, and we know the terrible outcome of their blind stupidity. With the experience of France before us, the hitherto "governing classes" of the United States, from Presidents of big Combines down to Committeemen of towns are called upon to readjust themselves to altered conditions of society in the process of evolution. Our governing class, our politicians, are no longer masters or bosses, but servants of the people. But it is a hard lesson for some of them to learn.

* * *

It is now six weeks since "Taxpayer," in these columns, opened up the question of public ownership of the water and light supplies, so needful for our town. That question is simply one between private interest and public welfare. Those four words tell it all. In the Township Committee, after the resolution passed by the first public meeting had been read, Mr. Stout made a speech in opposition to public lighting, which was the first objection that has been publicly made. If Mr. Stout should attend the meeting in Union Hall to-night, and repeat his speech, no doubt there will be men there ready to answer him courteously. Although a people's meeting, no one there will probably "return the compliment" by saying he is "next door to crazy" because he is in favor of private monopoly instead of public ownership.

* * *

Any traction company desiring to use our streets for electric railway purposes should be given to understand, at the start, that we will give no privileges without a written guarantee that the township shall receive back in a tax or rental for the use of the streets what will be considered a fair division of the net profits accruing from the operation of the cars. As the traffic increases from year to year the citizens should derive an increased income from the road. This above anything else should be insisted on, and with a forfeiture clause should be incorporated in the amended franchise. Let citizens remember this and demand it when the time arrives for a ratification or rejection of the franchise.

* * *

The natural enemy of public ownership is private monopoly. As was said at the first public welfare meeting, if it is a good scheme for a private concern to acquire rights of the people and get in on the ground floor and tax us, it is a better scheme for the people to bond and tax and benefit themselves.

Some people are forever getting ready to do something, while there are others who do not say anything but go ahead and do it. To the latter class belong the Young Men's Catholic Union who have taken the old Catholic Church, put an extension on the front in which they have on the first floor a reading room on one side, and reception room on the other. Upstairs is a large meeting room with balconies outside for summer use. The building will be furnished complete as a gymnasium with a gallery at one end for spectators. In the rear are two card rooms—and eventually the basement will be fitted up for a bowling alley. Any of their young men by paying one dollar entrance fee and 25 cents per month can enjoy all its privileges. Does not this put to shame the Protestant community with seven churches represented in the Evangelical Union and no place for the young men except the street or go to church? There are some who think that the church supplies all that is necessary; if they saw the crowd of young men on the evening trains for Newark they would take a different view of the matter and do something.

A sermon was preached in town recently upon the "Ninth Commandment." It was said that in these days between the press and reporters the retailing of slander was so cleverly wrought that it would be futile to attempt to counteract it, as they would have the last word. Just a word for the newspaper and reporters. There are good and bad members of churches, and newspaper men are no better nor worse than other people. If slow Bloomfield has afforded opportunities to publish scandals they have been suppressed in the interest of Home—although publication would have brought a harvest. The reporter in his travels finds the doors of many closets open, but has shut his eyes to the skeletons revealed.

Bishop Wigger has issued a circular letter to the Roman Catholic clergy of this diocese withdrawing all directions in regard to refusing absolution to "those parents who without sufficient reason send their children to public schools." This means that Roman Catholics can now send their children to parochial schools or not, as they may choose, but can use the public schools if so disposed and not incur censure. This is not likely to work any great change here in Bloomfield just at present, as the parish will be slow to accept the freedom of choice offered.

Women are pushing the men more and more all the time. Out in Oregon a girl of twenty years carries the mail over a dangerous route four or five times a week. The State Librarian of Michigan is Mrs. Margaret Custer Calhoun, sister of the late General Custer. In Finland, the women compete with the men as clerks, insurance agents, house builders and bank cashiers. In the latter capacity as well as all others they have been found more honest than men. It would not do any harm when we have an election for school trustees in Bloomfield to put some of them on the board.

The most serious objection to Bloomfield ownership of water and light supplies is that "there would certainly be politics into it." Is our Township composed of worse material than these cities where the experiments have been tried successfully? Suppose politics should get mixed up in it just a little bit it would not hurt things at all. Would make people brush up who wanted to run the machine. There are some people looking around for the "nigger in the wood pile" concealed beneath these objections. Are these objections real or only mere subterfuges to conceal plans not quite ready to be devulged?

Everything has its use, as the waste smoke and gases from the blast furnaces of a Scotch iron works are rented for a handsome sum. Conducted through several miles of iron tubing gradually reduced in size, when cold they deposit a large yield of oil. From a comparatively small factory, about 25000 gallons of oil are recovered weekly, besides a large yield of sulphate of amonia and other bi products. The next thing will be to buy the breath of cigarette smoker and strong drinkers and run a pipe line from them for evaporated spirits, etc.

QUIDNUNC.

"King's Juries" In Pennsylvania.

"Do you know we are probably one of the most thoroughly back numbered cities in the country?" said Thomas Morrow of Pittsburg at the Lindell yesterday. "Of course we take a great deal of pride in our progress, our enterprise, and all that sort of thing, but still we're behind the age—away behind it. Why, do you know that we have actually got a law that provides for trial by king's juries? Just fancy that, will you? A system of king's juries in a big American city in 1893! Isn't it enough to kill you? Summoning men to serve their king and sit in a jury box as peers! It was a king's jury that tried the Duquesne rioters, and now their attorney has appealed on the ground that king's juries are not to be recognized at this late day. He is also preparing a bill to take before the legislature repealing this old and nonsensical but disagreeable law."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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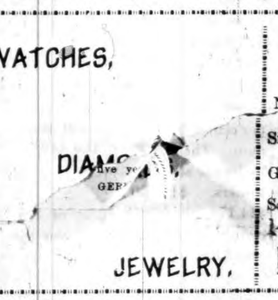

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FUNERAL OF A DRUID

STRANGE DEATH RITES ON A LOFTY HILLTOP IN WALES.

Impressive Ceremonies Attending the Final Disposition of the Body of the Late Leader of the Druids of Wales—Rather Mixed Services.

Far away seem the times and the rites of the Druids; even under the mistletoe at yuletide—the time of Yowling. Theirs was one of the most ancient and primitive of religions, and its cult is greatly shrouded in mystery. Yet it is not altogether dead. Among the hills of Wales many strange relics of the past remain. There may be no "fragments of forgotten peoples," but there are legends and customs and songs and social and religious rites preserved unchanged from the days of Arthur and Merlin and Taliessin. There are probably not a few seers who, like Glendower, "can summon spirits from the vasty deep," though whether or not they will come is yet a mooted question. And as for the Druids, their line is yet unbroken, and their weird rites are still celebrated as of old.

The death occurred at Llantrisant of Dr. William Price, who held the distinguished office of archdruid of Wales. He was something more than 93 years old and might have passed for one of the old time bards who perished in King Edward's reign, so rugged and antique was his appearance. Six or seven years ago, it may be remembered, an infant that had been born to him in his old age died, and its body was publicly cremated by him with Druidical rites. For this he was arrested and brought to trial. But after a hot contest in court he was acquitted, and a decree was pronounced from the bench establishing the entire legality of this form of funeral. Accordingly when Dr. Price himself died a similar ceremony was enacted without thought of interference.

The ceremony took place on the summit of a high hill at Caerlan, the very spot where the body of the infant had been burned. Several hundred tickets were issued to the friends and former patients of Dr. Price, entitling them to enter the inclosure and witness the burning. The hour first set was noon. But public curiosity rose to so high a pitch that, to avoid being overwhelmed by a mob of sightseers, it was at the last moment decided to change it to 7 o'clock in the morning. So in the gray light of that early hour the strange procession made its way to the hilltop. No mourning garb was to be seen. The closest friends of the deceased Druid were attired in the ancient costumes of the Welsh people.

The body of Dr. Price was clothed in the Druidical robes he had worn in life and was then placed in a coffin of perforated sheet iron. On the hilltop two stone walls had been built, four feet apart, each being about 10 feet long and 4 feet high. A number of iron bars extending from one to the other formed a rude grating between them, some distance above the ground, and upon these bars the coffin was placed, the head being toward the east and the feet toward the west.

A clergyman of the Established church was present and read the ordinary service for the dead in Welsh. The vestments of the church contrasted as strangely with the Druidical garb worn by some of the attendants as did the words of the prayer book with the strange rites. Some slight changes were made in the service, such as the body being "consigned to the flames."

Then under and over and all around the coffin was piled a great lot of wood, perhaps a whole cord of it, and to this were added several tons of coal. Many gallons of paraffin oil were thrown upon it, thoroughly saturating the entire pile. Then, at about 8 o'clock, two of the closest friends of the late Druid came forward from the throng and applied torches to the wood, one at each end of the mass. In a moment it was all a raging furnace, and the hill literally flared like a volcano.

A brisk breeze was blowing, which fanned the fire and carried the flame and smoke far into the heavens. For many miles the strange spectacle was clearly seen, and thousands of people came flocking thither from all parts of Glamorganshire. Seven or eight thousand of them gathered in a ring about the pyre, as close to it as possible, and watched it with eager interest all day long.

Some hours after dark that evening the flames had died down, and there was only a dull glow from the coals. Then with long hooks they dragged the coffin from the furnace, when it was discovered that it had been literally burned through in many places, and when the lid was uncovered the receptacle was absolutely empty without the faintest trace within of the remains. The coffin was subsequently conveyed on a bier, followed by an immense crowd, and deposited on the couch in the deceased's residence, where a few days previously he had breathed his last.—New York Tribune.

Two Wealthy Girls With No Taste.

Two girls sat awhile ago in opposite stage boxes at the theater to whose united wealth the word inconceivable would almost literally apply. Both were faintly pretty, of the style that is absolutely null without proper dressing. One, the most decided type of blond, wore pale blue. The result was simply flat. The other girl is a brunette and was dressed in a brown silk (which is the ugliest and most characterless wear the mind of man can devise, except in combination), and had a wisp of illusion tied tightly around her neck.—New York Letter.

A Stanch Friend.

Old Gent (proposing health of the happy pair at the wedding breakfast)—And as for the bridegroom, I can speak with still more confidence of him, for I was present at his christening, I was present at the banquet given in honor of his coming of age, I am present here today, and, God willing, I'll be present at his funeral. (Sensation.)—Pick Me Up.

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